

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-8, 11, 13, 14, 16-27, 29, and 31-41 are now pending in the application. Claims 13, 14, 16-27, 29, 31-39, and 41 are allowed. Claim 40 has been cancelled. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 AND 103

Claims 1-3, 5, 8, and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ishigure et al. (U.S. Pat. Publication No. 2001/0024617, hereinafter “Ishigure”). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 6 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being unpatentable over Ishigure. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

At the outset, Applicants note that claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of allowable claim 40. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is in condition for allowance. Claims 2, 3, 5, 8, and 11 depend from claim 1 and, therefore, should be in condition for allowance for the reasons set forth above. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-3, 5, 8, and 11 are respectfully requested.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Claims 13, 14, 16-27, 29, 31-39, and 41 are allowed. The Examiner states that claim 40 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the limitations of claim 40 as indicated above.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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